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Message Text

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62
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 AGR-20 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

SAM-01 L-03 DRC-01 /111 W
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R 061219Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2172
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR USIA PREPARATION COMPREHENSIVE NEWS
STORY ON PL 480 DEVELOPMENTS.

1. I SENSE A NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NEWS STORY ON THE PL-480 SITUATION AS IT AFFECTS ALL RECIPIENT COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. THERE IS A GROWING FEELING WHICH HAS BEEN EXPRESSED TO MANY OFFICERS AT THE MISSION THAT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT BOLIVIA IS ENCOUNTERING IN ACQUIRING NEW AGREEMENTS FOR PL-480 IS THE RESULT OF A FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IN US POLICY FROM HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COMMERCIAL SALES. THERE IS ALSO EQUAL MISUNDER-STANDING THAT THIS SHIFT IN POLICY MAY BE APPLIED ONLY TO BOLIVIA. MEMBERS OF THIS MISSION HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB IN ATTEMPTING TO EXPLAIN THAT THE PL-480 PROGRAM IS BASED ON THE EXISTENCE OF EXCESS COMMODITIES AND THAT IN SPITE OF LARGE US PRODUCTION, THE COMMERCIAL SALES PRECLUDE PL-480 PROGRAMS ON THE SCALE OF PREVIOUS YEARS. WE HAVE ALSO ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN THAT THIS AFFECTS BOLIVIA BUT IS NOT POINTED AT BOLIVIA. I DO NOT THINK THAT WE ARE GETTING OUR MESSAGE ACROSS AND KNOW THAT THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE DO NOT HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WHO MIS-UNDERSTAND RECENT COMMODITY DEVELOPMENTS. I AM NOT INTER-ESTED IN A STORY TAILORMADE FOR BOLIVIA; RATHER IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE MUST BE IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THIS ONE, SERIOUS QUESTIONS
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AND DOUBTS BEING RAISED WHICH COULD WELL BE PUT TO REST BY A

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SKILLFUL PRESENTATION OF THE FACTS SURROUNDING CHANGES IN OUR ABILITY TO CARRY ON PL-480 OF THE MAGNITUDE OF PREVIOUS YEARS.

2. THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER OF THIS POST HAS REQUESTED USIA TO DEVELOP A STORY ALONG THESE LINES WHICH REPORTS THAT IT HAS ENCOUNTERED NEGATIVE REACTIONS FROM AID, STATE AND AGRICULTURE. THE ASSERTION IS THAT TRYING TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION MIGHT DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD. THIS IS A POSITION WHICH NO ONE HERE AT THIS MISSION IS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND. IT HAS ALSO BEEN ASSERTED THAT A STORY ABOUT THE PL-480 SITUATION COULD DO SOMETHING WITH THE MARKET WHICH IS EQUALLY DIFFICULT FOR US HERE TO FATHOM

3. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO ATTEMPT TO ELICIT A FAVOR-ABLE RESPONSE FROM WASHINGTON AGENCIES TO OVERCOME BY A WELL DEVELOPED STORY THE HALF TRUTHS AND MISINFORMATION ALREADY APPEARING IN US AND FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS. WE HERE RECOGNIZE THAT BOLIVIA HAS HAD GOOD FORTUNE WITHIN THE PL-480 ALLOCATIONS BUT THIS HEIGHTENS RATHER THAN LESSENS THE NEED FOR A WELL REASONED STORY FOR WORLDWIDE CONSUMPTION. I CAN VISUALIZE THE INCLUSION IN SUCH A STORY OF SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISH-MENTS OF PL-480 PROGRAMS BASED ON THE USE OF LOCAL CURRENCY. INCLUDED IN SUCH SUCH INFORMATION MIGHT BE A PRESENTATION OF PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE HAD SUCCESS IN RAISING DOMESTIC PRODUCTION OF FOODSTUFFS.

4. IF IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR USIA TO PUT OUT SUCH A STORY, COULD WE NOT COMMISSION ON A CONTRACT A SKILLED JOURNALIST TO PRODUCE SUCH A STORY POSSIBLY FOR PUBLICATION IN AN ACCEPTABLE US PUBLICATION. THIS THEN COULD BE REPRODUCED IN THE LOCAL MEDIA FOR SUBSTANTIAL BENEFIT IN ACHIEVING UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SITUATION.
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